

Application No.: 09/823,430

Docket No.: COSTEL 3.0-001

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A protective enclosure or cover for a keyboard assembly having a plurality of keys on a top face thereof, and an obverse face opposite said top face and, optionally, a means to provide communication between said keyboard and an external device; said enclosure having an envelope-like structure comprising at least a top panel, two vertical side panels, a vertical front panel and a vertical rear panel, said enclosure of a size to receive said keyboard when said enclosure is minimally stretched, wherein said top panel comprises a thin, elastomeric and substantially transparent membrane in proximate contact with said keys of said keyboard, provided that said top panel cross-section does not correspond to the depressions or elevations of a specific keyboard array, wherein said cover retains a significant level of the touch or feel of the keyboard keys underlying said cover.
2. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 comprising a substantially homogeneous elastomeric composition.
3. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the elastomeric composition of said side panels has less elasticity and/or transparency than said top panel.
4. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein said enclosure includes an obverse face overlaying at least a portion of said obverse keyboard face.
5. (original) The enclosure of claim 4 wherein said obverse enclosure face overlays a substantial portion of said obverse keyboard face and said obverse enclosure face

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further includes an opening that, when stretched, permits entry of said keyboard.

6. (original) he enclosure of claim 5 wherein at least one of the elastomeric compositions of said obverse enclosure face and/or side panels have less elasticity and/or transparency than said top panel.
7. (previously presented) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein said keyboard further comprises at least one communication means between said keyboard and an external device.
8. (original) The enclosure of claim 7 wherein at least one of said panels includes an opening to permit the passage therethrough of an electrically conducting cord or cable, or the transmission of a light beam to or from said keyboard.
9. (previously presented) The enclosure of claim 7 comprising a clear portion through which a light beam can pass.
10. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein said elastomer is selected from the group consisting of substantially hydrogenated, block copolymers based on blocks derived from predominantly monovinyl aromatic monomers having 8 to 20 carbon atoms and blocks derived from conjugated diene monomers having 4 to 8 carbon atoms; elastomeric polyolefin homopolymers or ethylene alphaolefin copolymers; and thermoplastic polyolefin homopolymers or copolymers wherein said thermoplastic homopolymers or copolymers include a dispersed phase of partially or substantially fully vulcanized rubber.

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11. (original) The enclosure of claim 10 wherein said elastomer further comprises an antiblock agent.
12. (original) The enclosure of claim 11 wherein said antiblock agent is selected from the group consisting of small particle size inorganic or organic powders and liquid compositions comprising at least one of wax and silicone.
13. (original) The enclosure of claim 12 comprising a block copolymer of derived from blocks of styrene and butadiene wherein said block copolymer has been substantially hydrogenated.
14. (original) The enclosure of claim 13 wherein said block copolymer is a styrene-ethylene/butylene-styrene block copolymer.
15. (original) The enclosure of claim 13 wherein said obverse enclosure face overlays a substantial portion of said obverse keyboard face and said obverse enclosure face further includes an opening that, when stretched, permits entry of said keyboard; wherein at least one of said vertical panels includes an opening or can be stretched to permit the passage therethrough of an electrically conducting cord or cable, or the transmission of a light beam to or from said keyboard.
16. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein the top surfaces of said keys comprises Braille system indicators.
17. (original) The enclosure of claim 1 wherein at least said top panel comprises a low modulus elastomer.

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18. (currently amended) A structure comprising a keyboard assembly and a protective enclosure therefore, wherein said keyboard assembly has a plurality of keys on a top face thereof, and an obverse face opposite said top face and, optionally, a means to provide communication between said keyboard and an external device; and wherein said enclosure has an envelope-like structure comprising at least a top panel, two vertical side panels, a vertical front panel and a vertical rear panel, said enclosure of a size to receive said keyboard when said enclosure is only minimally stretched, wherein said top panel comprises a thin, elastomeric and substantially transparent or translucent membrane in proximate contact with said keys of said keyboard, provided that said top panel cross-section does not correspond to the depressions or elevations of a specific keyboard array, wherein said cover retains a significant level of the touch or feel of the keyboard keys underlying said cover.
19. (currently amended) A method of avoiding the transmission of disease carrying organisms between at least one user and other users of a keyboard comprising having said at least one user apply to said keyboard prior to use thereof, and removing prior to use of said keyboard by another, of a personal, easily removable keyboard cover to said keyboard by said user, said cover comprising a protective enclosure or cover for a keyboard assembly having a plurality of keys on a top face thereof, and an obverse face opposite said top face and, optionally, a means to provide communication between said keyboard and an external device; said enclosure having an envelope-like structure comprising at least a top panel, two vertical side panels, a vertical front panel and a vertical rear panel, said enclosure of a size to receive

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said keyboard when said enclosure is only minimally stretched, wherein said top panel comprises a thin, elastomeric and substantially transparent or translucent membrane in proximate contact with said keys of said keyboard, wherein said cover retains a significant level of the touch or feel of the keyboard keys underlying said cover.